

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended, and new claims 11 and 12 have been added. Support for all amendments to the claims can be found in the specification, claims, and drawings as originally filed. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner has indicated that claim 2 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and includes the limitations “wherein the barrel is slidable along the gate to a locking position, where the barrel overlaps the free end of the body with the gate in a closed position.” None of the cited prior art references, namely, UK Patent Application GB 2077838A, EP 0318742, US 5,878,834, and WO 93/25822 disclose the barrel overlapping the free end of a body with the gate in a closed position. Therefore, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter by adding the limitation of “wherein the barrel overlaps the free end of the body when locking the gate in a closed position”. Also, claim 1 has been amended further to include the amendatory language “wherein the barrel has a greater thickness or strength on its face outward of the body when the gate is in a closed position so as to reinforce the karabiner against inward forces applied to the gate region thereof.” Support for this amendatory language is found on page 4, first paragraph of the present specification. Dependent claim 2 has been amended to delete the limitation “where the barrel overlaps a free end of the body with the gate in a closed position”. Because all the remaining dependent claims depend directly from amended independent claim 1, claims 1-10 are now in condition for allowance.

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New Claims

New dependent claims 11 and 12 have been added by this amendment. New claim 11 depends from amended independent claim 1 and new claim 12 depends from new dependent claim 11. Support for new claim 11 is found in Figure 4 of the drawings. In Figure 4, the thicker region 32 of the barrel 30 is faced sideward of the body 12 instead of outward of the body as claimed in claim 1 and shown in Figure 2. The thicker region 32 being sideward of the body reinforces the karabiner against side forces applied to the gate region thereof. New claim 12, which depends from claim 11, includes an aperture in the barrel 30 that coincides with the region of greater thickness. Support for new claim 12 is found in the enclosed drawing Figures 3 and 4. Figures 3 and 4 show the thicker region 32 coinciding with the aperture (highlighted) in the barrel 30. Because new claims 11 and 12 depend directly and indirectly from amended independent claim 1 respectively, new claims 11 and 12 are believed to be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of claims 1-12 are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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